

**Stockton, Marissa**

**From:** Niki Zupanic [nikiz@aclumontana.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 14, 2011 10:31 PM  
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**Cc:** Stockton, Marissa; cary@bresnan.net  
**Subject:** Testimony on HB 456

Dear Chairman Reichner and members of the committee,

Due to time constraints, I did not deliver the testimony I had prepared in opposition to HB 456 (C. Smith – "Define scope/boundaries of human sexuality/reproductive ed in K-12 public schools"), but told you that I would be submitting my comments via email. Please accept the following comments in opposition to the bill.

On behalf of our nearly 2,000 members statewide, the American Civil Liberties Union of Montana opposes HB 456. We are concerned with the faulty logic that is being applied through this bill. First, there are many lesson plans that would potentially present information that is different from an individual family's belief system – topics of religion and morality come up in history, sociology, literature and even science classes. Yet, this bill singles out only one type of subject matter for different treatment under our state law. Only this one subject matter is singled out for diminished local control by the school board and the community for that local district. The same reasons why we do not codify opt-out and notice provisions, and limitations on outside resources, for all other subject matters – namely, our commitment to a well-rounded education for all students – should be applied to this subject matter, as well.

Second, this bill relies on the flawed assumption that there is an inherent conflict between providing abortion services and being able to provide accurate, unbiased information on the topic of sexual education and reproductive health. This bill takes away the ability of local educators to bring in the person or entity that they think is most qualified to provide this information.

We support students receiving the best information possible, and we think that his bill draws arbitrary lines that will get in the way of local districts and communities providing that information. For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote do not pass on HB 456.

Sincerely,  
Niki Zupanic

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